

**Minutes of: POLICY SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**Date of Meeting: 26 November 2007**

**Present: Councillor Cheetham (Chair)  
Councillors L Barnes (substitute for Lynskey), Steen and Pilling**

**In Attendance: Linda Fisher, Executive Director of Regulatory Services  
Carolyn Law, Committee and Member Services Officer  
Caroline Ridge, Assistant Planner – Forward Planning**

**Also Present: Councillors Essex, Neal, Sandiford and Swain.  
3 members of the public**

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**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were submitted on behalf of Councillors Haworth, Lynskey and Hewlett.

**2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

**Resolved:**

That the Minutes of the last meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2007 be agreed and signed by the Chair as a correct record.

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations were made.

**4. URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS**

No urgent items were raised under this item.

**5. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME**

Questions were raised by a member of the public regarding planning applications on the Council website. In response, the Executive Director of Regulatory Services explained that applications are published once they are validated, and are then available to view in the One Stop Shop.

**6. ROSSENDALE INTERIM HOUSING POLICY STATEMENT**

The Executive Director of Regulatory Services and the Assistant Planner – Forward Planning informed the Committee that the purpose of the report was to bring back to Cabinet a revised Interim Housing Policy in light of the representations received from the January consultations. The aim of the report was to achieve a balanced approach which takes into account concerns regarding housing oversupply, but

also regenerative priorities and the delivery of affordable housing. The comments of the Policy Scrutiny Committee were requested for discussion.

A number of questions were raised by members of the public including: Whitworth and Edenfield are not included in the maps of the urban boundary, it was questioned by members of the public that the policy was too rigid; what was available for agricultural areas; policies in other local authorities were also referred to, and the target of 42% was questioned on whether it was deliverable.

Councillors attending the meeting questioned developments in back gardens; Priority 2 - regeneration across the borough; questions were also raised on affordable housing and land on which to develop affordable housing in the borough.

Officers explained that this was not a policy saying Rossendale is full, it's a policy saying housing should be delivered in the right locations and at the right time and in the right place. Questions were responded to by Officers as follows: the policy does not stop mixed development and is encouraging the development of brownfield sites in accordance with national Policy and latest guidance; affordable housing should be delivered on site in the first instance, however off site contributions are also permitted, the Council would use this money to match fund to deliver affordable housing schemes; work needs to be done to identify allocation sites where affordable housing developments could be undertaken; other boroughs are in a different position to Rossendale so their policies are not appropriate, this policy encourages investment and development in the required areas; the 42% is based on evidence of needs across the borough; whilst back garden developments could be an issue, each planning application is subject to additional development control policy, biodiversity policy and each application is analysed on its own merits.

It was agreed that the Executive Director of Regulatory Services feedback the Committees comments to Cabinet.

## **7. PLANNING SCHEME OF DELEGATION**

The Executive Director of Regulatory Services informed the Committee that the purpose of the report was to update and amend the wording of the current Scheme of Delegation and to consider the suggested amendment to the call in procedures. The report had been considered by the Constitutional Working Group and their response had been included in the report. The main amendments were discussed as identified in the report and the Committee was informed that the report would be brought to the Development Control Committee in December.

Questions were raised in relation to the Call In procedures in Appendix 3. In response, the Executive Director of Regulatory Services agreed to clarify points 4 and 6, and circulate the graphs and the Call In Form.

Councillor Swain suggested including notification on all planning applications concerning who to contact regarding a call in.

The Executive Director of Regulatory Services agreed to feedback to the

Committees comments to Development Control.

**8. FORWARD PLAN FOR THE PERIOD 1<sup>st</sup> DECEMBER 2007 TO 31<sup>st</sup> MARCH 2008**

The Committee reviewed the key decisions within the Forward Plan for the period 1<sup>st</sup> December 2007 to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2008.

In response to a question on the Core Strategy the Executive Director of Regulatory Services gave a verbal update on the current position and informed the Committee that it would be expected to go to Cabinet in March 2008.

The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Management Committee reported that at the Cabinet meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> November it was requested that the Waste Management Strategy be reviewed by Overview and Scrutiny. The Policy Scrutiny Committee agreed that the Strategy would be reviewed at their next meeting.

**(The meeting commenced at 6.30pm and closed at 8.45pm)**

Signed.....  
(Chair)

Date .....